

# Student plans cover new surgery benefit

## Gender affirmation surgery covered

By Austin Hess  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The MIT Medical Transgender Health FAQ website now lists a “Surgery” benefit of up to \$50,000 per year as part of coverage available to transgender patients under the MIT Student Extended Insurance Plan. The added coverage is for gender affirmation surgery (GAS), also known as gender reassignment surgery, in which some transgender individuals undergo procedures to modify their physical sex characteristics to match those traditionally associated with their transitioning identity.

MIT previously extended this coverage to its employees under the MIT Traditional Health Plan and MIT Choice Plan in a change announced July 30, 2013. At that time,

the change did not apply to MIT’s coverage for students.

Both employee and student plans continue to cover visits with MIT providers, blood tests, and hormone therapy as part of transgender health care according to the website.

According to Abigail Francis, director of LGBT services at MIT, and Lucy Walsh, director of finance for MIT Medical, this change is the result of extended advocacy by several groups, including LGBT@MIT, a program under MIT’s Division of Student Life and part of the Student Activities Office according to its website.

“[LGBT@MIT] has worked with students and with MIT Medical staff for several years to identify gender-

Insurance, Page 10

## Manhole cover blows off, power outage follows



JESSICA L. WASS—THE TECH

Around 12:30 p.m. on Friday, a problem with the MIT cogeneration plant caused a campus-wide partial power outage. Shortly before the outage, a manhole cover flew out of its housing in front of sorority Kappa Alpha Theta. Since the power plant uses the steam system for its active cooling, the two incidents are likely related.

# 1,419 students, or 7.7 percent, admitted into the Class of 2018

## Target class size is approximately 1,050 new freshmen

By Victoria Messuri

MIT released its undergraduate admissions decisions for the Class of 2018 on Friday, March 14 at 6:28 p.m., with a target class size somewhat smaller than those of the past few years due to the closure of Bex-

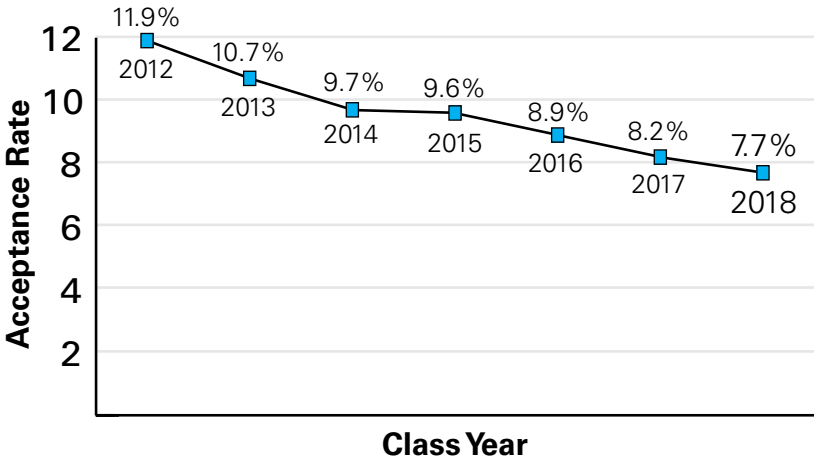
ley Hall.

As a result, the Institute admitted only 1,419 students this year, compared to 1,548 last year. Of the 1,419 who were admitted, less than half (612 students) were admitted through early action in December. A total of 18,357 students applied,

setting a record-low admission rate of 7.7 percent. According to a MIT News Office press release, the target class size for the incoming class is about 1,050 students.

According to the Dean for Un-

Admissions, Page 9



18,357\*  
students applied

612  
admitted via  
early action

807  
admitted via  
regular decision

\*This year, MIT made a change in the way it counts the number of applicants, resulting in a lower number than it would have been using the old method.

Infographic By: Will Conway and Esme Rhine

# Prof. Alan Guth’s theory supported

## Scientific breakthrough reported

By Dennis Overbye  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — One night late in 1979, an itinerant young physicist named Alan Guth, with a new son and a year’s appointment at Stanford, stayed up late with his notebook and equations, venturing far beyond the world of known physics.

He was trying to understand why there was no trace of some exotic particles that should have been created in the Big Bang. Instead he discovered what might have made the universe bang to begin with. A potential hitch in the presumed course of cosmic evolution could have infused space itself with a special energy that exerted a repulsive force, causing the universe to swell faster than the speed of light for a prodigiously violent instant.

If true, the rapid engorgement would solve paradoxes like why the heavens look uniform from pole to pole and not like a jagged, warped

mess. The enormous ballooning would iron out all the wrinkles and irregularities. Those particles were not missing, but would be diluted beyond detection, like spit in the ocean.

“SPECTACULAR REALIZATION,” Guth wrote across the top of the page and drew a double box around it.

On Monday, Guth’s starship came in. Radio astronomers reported that they had seen the beginning of the Big Bang, and that his hypothesis, known undramatically as inflation, looked right.

Reaching back across 13.8 billion years to the first sliver of cosmic time with telescopes at the South Pole, a team of astronomers led by John M. Kovac of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics detected ripples in the fabric of space-time — so-called gravitational waves — the signature of a universe being wrenched violently

Guth, Page 9

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Campus-wide power outage

On Friday, March 14, a campus-wide power outage impacted all MIT buildings powered by the MIT cogeneration plant. MIT Facilities reported that a manhole explosion outside of Green Hall on the corner of Amherst Alley and Danforth Street was the cause of the campus-wide power outage.

MITAlert issued a warning to

the community at 1 p.m. on Friday asking people to avoid the area around Green Hall. At 2 p.m., MITAlert issued an update stating that power was in the process of being restored. MITAlert issued a final update at 2:45 p.m. on Friday stating that the power outage had been resolved, and that Facilities would continue working to ensure full power restoration.

Simmons Hall was the only residence hall that did not lose power completely; the power only went out for a few seconds. Inter-

net problems at Maseeh as recent as yesterday can be attributed to the outage, given that network equipment was damaged and is in the process of being restored.

### Trend of increasing tuition continues

Undergraduate tuition will increase by 3.5 percent for the 2014–2015 academic year. This increase follows a 3.45 percent increase from the 2013–14 academic year.

News briefs, Page 11

## IN SHORT

**Registration for the Spring Break dining plan** is due today. Students who wish to participate in the plan should sign up online. The Spring Break meal plan begins March 23 and ends March 28.

**Freshman award nominations are open.** Students and members of the MIT faculty or staff may nominate any freshman for an award, which aims to recognize the distinguished achievements of freshmen in the Class of 2017.

**Undergraduate Association elections** will continue until 5 p.m. Friday, March 21. Vote online at <http://vote.mit.edu>.

**Housing intention forms are due March 31.** All students currently living on-campus who are eligible to do so next semester must complete the form to indicate whether they intend to stay in campus housing Fall 2014.

**Send news information and tips** to [news@tech.mit.edu](mailto:news@tech.mit.edu).

## UA ELECTION EDITORIAL

In narrow field, Sharma and Ndengeyingoma best option

OPNION, p. 4

## INVENTIVELY CLASSIC FASHION

Gulsha Chereli’s designs: featured at the Liberty Hotel. ARTS, p. 6

**BLUE: BOLDLY IMAGINATIVE**

Blue Inc. provides a unique restaurant experience. ARTS, p. 7



## THE RISKS YOU RUN WITH A MAKEOVER

Contemporary Comics: Just an edgy haircut, or a lifestyle change?

FUN, p. 5

## AUTUMN IN NEW YORK

Phoniks’ latest project features jazz-remixed hip-hop titles.

ARTS, p. 6

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# A culinary rhapsody in blue

# Inspired new American cuisine

For our latest night out on the town, we ventured into the financial district and visited Blue Inc., a place for wild culinary adventures helmed by Chef Jason Santos of FOX's "Hell's Kitchen." It was a little hard to get there — it was a

10 minute walk from the Downtown Crossing T station — but the food and the handcrafted cocktails were definitely worth the trip. Blue Inc. serves mostly new American-style cuisine, although many of the dishes are inspired by Asian spices and flavors. With six in our group, we were able to share and sample a variety of dishes.

We began with a selection of appetizers, each more delicious than the last. The calamari “spaghetti” (\$10) consisted of thinly sliced calamari rings, appropriately fresh and melt-in-your-mouth tender. This was served with a delectable pastrami Bolognese and a piece of garlic bread, toasted to crispy perfection but still soft in the

middle. Next was the crispy pork belly (\$12), a generous slab of succulent pork served with balled apples and a sweet sauce that nicely complemented the savory pork.

But the real highlight of the appetizers was the buffalo duck drumettes (\$12), a twist on traditional chicken wings. Covered in a tangy spicy-sweet barbecue sauce and served with chipotle mayo on the side, the duck legs were simply finger-licking tasty.

For entrees, duck was the star of the show again. The honey and hoisin-glazed duck confit (\$26), was an Asian-inspired delight for the taste buds. Served on a bed of sweet sticky rice with mango and cashews, the duck had a mild savory-sweet flavor that we greatly enjoyed. The crunchy Ahi tuna (\$26) was also a nice choice, accompanied with steamed rice, sesame avocado, and yuzu green beans in a sweet and creamy sake-apple puree. With the exception of the beans, the flavors in this dish were perhaps too mild, and may have benefited from added spices or some traditional wasabi. We also had a bite of the southern-style boneless fried chicken (\$26), which was just otherworldly. Served on a pepper jack waffle with bacon, poached pear, and

★★★★★

## Blue Inc.

**131 Broad St., Boston**

**Monday – Friday:**  
**11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

**Saturday: 5 p.m. – 2 a.m.**

**Sunday: Closed**



COURTESY OF BLUE INC.

**Blue Inc. offers culinary adventures in the financial district of Boston.**

smoked maple caramel, we plotted a return just for this dish.

Dessert, always a favorite, did not disappoint at Blue Inc. Amid a variety of nontraditional liquid nitrogen milkshake flavors, such as pumpkin pie, caramel corn, and chai green tea, we tried the S'mores milkshake and felt like very happy campers. Clearly our chef used top-quality chocolate in the shake, topping it off with graham cracker crumbs (this must have been what that \$5 shake in *Pulp Fiction* tasted like). Ideal for a special occasion, Blue Inc. is definitely near the top of our list of happening spots with quality and boldly imaginative cuisine and is a unique restaurant experience not to be missed.

# Homebuying 101

Learn what's involved in buying a house and making it your home - whether it's your first, or you're in the market again.

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- Current area market housing trends
- Financing options
- And much more

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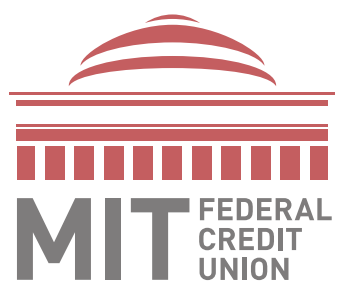
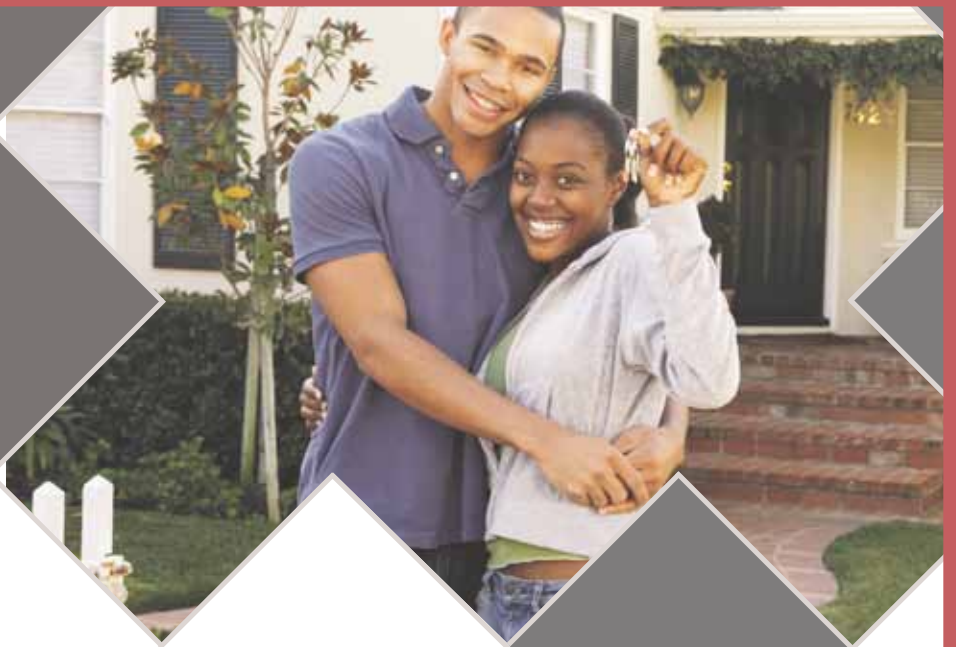
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BY ERIKA TRENT



## by Letitia Li

Subject: Office Hours

To: class-mailing-list  
From: Your Brilliant TA

If you would like help with the pset, come find me tomorrow between:  
 <The 2nd digit of the 5th most commonly used capacitor size> PM and  
 <The solution to problem 5> PM,  
 somewhere in building:  
 <Number of letters in the 2nd word the professor said during Tuesday's lecture>.

Hope to see you there!

## Solution, page 10

1 "The blood is the life!" penner  
 11 Hamburger course  
 15 Tops  
 16 Realty datum  
 17 Part of some vinegar recipes  
 18 Red alert  
 19 Metaphorical pretense  
 20 New England college town  
 21 Necessitates striking, say  
 22 Subject of the books Power Failure  
     and Pipe Dreams  
 24 Without incurring damages?  
 26 What an asterisk often means  
 29 Drop of medicine  
 30 Possible results of going long  
 31 Species subgroups  
 34 Producer of some shells  
 35 Last chance to make the cut  
 37 Marching-band accessory  
 40 Entangles  
 41 What a lazy lyricist might use  
 44 Common way to buy glasses  
 46 Got moving, so to speak  
 48 Tundra rodent hunter  
 51 Fabricated  
 52 Station on the Paris-Cherbourg  
     line  
 53 One's due, on the street  
 56 Cartoonist who popularized  
     "double whammy"  
 57 Brownie brand  
 58 An alien might miss it  
 60 Crayola color similar to Asparagus  
 61 By hook or by crook

- 1 Least likely to shrink
- 2 Got sweeter, perhaps
- 3 Seeks
- 4 National Gallery endower
- 5 GPS reading
- 6 It could hold your notice
- 7 Scheherazade soloist
- 8 Taekwondo's origin
- 9 Main \_\_\_\_
- 10 Think none too highly of
- 11 What goes on before the finish
- 12 Music inspired by Sgt. Pepper
- 13 "They" alternative
- 14 Rhapsody.com purchase of 2011
- 23 "Inconceivable!"
- 25 "Greatest singer in the world,"  
per Presley
- 27 Impeccability indicator
- 28 Reason for a review
- 32 Old Testament priest
- 33 Tesla, for one
- 35 Party hang-ups
- 36 In \_\_\_\_ Speramus (Brown motto)
- 37 Shortens, in a way
- 38 Hammer-handle source
- 39 Ones alleviating that sinking  
feeling?
- 41 Queen of comedy
- 42 Avoid crossing
- 43 Twist, in the end
- 45 Of fashionable society

47 Small racer  
49 Put on the sheets?  
50 Prodigious folk-music archivist  
54 Clinton Transportation and Energy

Secretary  
55 Gould/Sutherland's M\*A\*S\*H  
followup with title asterisks  
59 Wax buildup?



# MIT grants fewer admissions to 2018's

## Bexley closure and high yield cited

Admissions, from Page 1

dergraduate Education's office, the number of undergraduate students was expected to increase over three years, starting with the Class of 2015 and ending with the Class of 2018, due to the additional housing capacity afforded by the reopening of Maseeh Hall in the fall of 2011.

According to enrollment statistics from the Office of the Registrar, first-year student enrollment increased for the Classes of 2015 and 2016, but the current freshman class actually experienced a slight decrease in first-year student enrollment. The number of first-year students to be enrolled for the 2013-2014 academic year is expected to fall even lower than this year's.

The loss of accommodation provided by Bexley Hall, which housed 116 undergraduate students, is significant and long-term. Bexley was closed on June 8, 2013 after the building was deemed unsafe for residents due to structural problems. Plans for Bexley's demolition, or what will be built in its place, have not yet been determined.

"Housing capacity is an important consideration in determining our target class size," Dean of Admissions Stuart Schmill '86 told *The Tech*.

He continued, "Our target this year is about 70 fewer students than last year." There were 1,118 first-year students enrolled in the

fall of 2013.

According to Schmill, the decreased target class size was not the only reason that MIT admitted fewer students to the Class of 2018.

"We admitted fewer students also because our yield has been going up. If a higher percentage of admitted students choose to enroll, we have to admit fewer students so we do not over-enroll," Schmill said.

Currently, it is unclear what the target class size will be in the coming years.

### Adjustments in admissions data

This year, MIT made adjustments to how it counts the number of applicants. In the past, all applicants who paid an admissions fee or received a fee waiver were counted in the final applicant data. This year's total number of applicants includes only students who both paid the application fee (or received a fee waiver) and completed the entire student section of the application.

According to the MIT News Office, the total number of applicants this year represents a 2.5 percent increase from last year's when counted with the previous methodology — the most in MIT's history. However, with the switch to the new counting method, the total number of applicants reported by MIT this year is slightly lower than that reported last year.

# Evidence for theory in cosmology found

## Inflation theory tied to Big Bang

Guth, from Page 1

apart when it was roughly a trillionth of a trillionth of a second old. They are the long-sought smoking-gun evidence of inflation, proof, Kovac and his colleagues say, that Guth was correct.

Inflation has been the workhorse of cosmology for 35 years, though many, including Guth, wondered whether it could ever be proved.

If corroborated, Kovac's work will stand as a landmark in science comparable to the recent discovery of dark energy pushing the universe apart, or of the Big Bang itself. It would open vast realms of time and space and energy to science and speculation.

Confirming inflation would mean that the universe we see, extending 14 billion light-years in space with its hundreds of billions of galaxies, is only an infinitesimal patch in a larger cosmos whose extent, architecture and fate are unknowable. Moreover, beyond our own universe there might be an endless number of other universes bubbling into frothy eternity, like a pot of pasta water boiling over.

In our own universe, it would serve as a window into the forces operating at energies forever beyond the reach of particle accelerators on Earth and yield new insights into gravity itself. Kovac's ripples would be the first direct observation of gravitational waves, which, according to Albert Einstein's theory of general relativity, should ruffle space-time.

According to inflation theory, the waves are the hypothetical quantum particles, known as gravitons, that carry gravity, magnified by the expansion of the universe to extragalactic size.

"You can see how the sky is being distorted by gravitational waves,"

said Andrei Linde, a prominent inflation theorist at Stanford. "We are using our universe as a big microscope. The sky is a photographic plate."

Marc Kamionkowski of Johns Hopkins University, an early-universe expert who was not part of the team, said, "This is huge, as big as it gets."

"Although I might not fully understand it," Kamionkowski said, "this is a signal from the very earliest universe, sending a telegram encoded in gravitational waves."

The ripples manifested themselves as faint spiral patterns in a bath of microwave radiation that permeates space and preserves a picture of the universe when it was 380,000 years old and as hot as the surface of the Sun.

Kovac and his collaborators, working in an experiment known as BICEP, for Background Imaging of Cosmic Extragalactic Polarization, reported their results in a scientific briefing at the Center for Astrophysics here on Monday and in a set of papers submitted to *The Astrophysical Journal*.

Kovac said the chance that the results were a fluke was only one in 3.5 million — a gold standard of discovery called five-sigma.

Guth pronounced himself "bowled over," saying he had not expected such a definite confirmation in his lifetime.

"With nature, you have to be lucky," he said. "Apparently we have been lucky."

The results are the closely guarded distillation of three years' worth of observations and analysis. Eschewing email for fear of a leak, Kovac personally delivered drafts of his work to a select few, meeting with Guth, who is now a professor at MIT (as is his son, Larry, who was sleeping that night in 1979), in his office last week.

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# ESSENCE

## Ebony Affair

### APRIL 5, 2014

Morss Hall | Walker Memorial

6:00p - Cocktail Hour

7:00p - Dinner/Awards

8:30p - Formal Gala

### PRICES

Students: \$15

Faculty/Staff: \$35

BAMIT/Alum: \$35

Guests: \$45

Celebrating the Black  
Community at MIT

# ESSENCE OF EXCELLENCE



This space donated by *The Tech*





# Gender affirmation surgery is insured

*LBGT@MIT and MIT Trans Care team pushed for coverage change*

Insurance, from Page 1

affirming, gender-inclusive, and trans\*-friendly resources, professional development, and campus-wide education and awareness-raising opportunities,” Walsh and Francis wrote in an email to *The Tech*.

They said that LBGT@MIT collaborated with the MIT Trans Care team and student advocates to push for expanded coverage.

Walsh and Francis said that while the Employee Benefits Oversight Committee was able to extend the coverage to MIT employees last summer, a Student and Affiliate Health Insurance Advisory Committee was still being formed to investigate the effects of the Affordable Care Act on student insurance plans at the time, causing the delay in the availability of the benefit for students.

“Since there is a cost associated with adding any new coverage, it was appropriate for this decision to be considered in context with the other benefit changes that need to be made to be in compliance with the Affordable Care Act. The first meeting of the new Committee was in November 2013,” they wrote.

The recommendation to add the benefit came in January and was approved by top administrators, effective Feb. 1.

According to Walsh and Francis, “The Student Extended Insurance Plan is a Blue Cross Blue Shield Preferred Provider Organization, or PPO. Benefits will be determined based on the Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA established medical policy.” Service providers contracted under Blue Cross will submit claims directly, whereas students may need to pay for services at non-contracted providers themselves and later seek reimbursement. Walsh and Francis said Claims and Members Services on the first floor of E23 could provide more information.

According to nonprofit LGBT advocacy group Campus Pride, over 50 colleges and universities in the U.S. cover both GAS and hormone treatments for students, while nearly twenty cover only hormone treatments under student plans. According to Campus Pride and student newspapers at the institutions, all Ivy League universities except Columbia University provide coverage for GAS under student plans. Harvard added the coverage in November 2011.



BRUNO B. F. FAVIERO—THE TECH

**A couple dances to the tunes of the Compaq Big Band, the main musical attraction at Friday's Beaver Ball in Walker Memorial.** The event was a celebration of MIT mascot Tim the Beaver's 100-year anniversary.

SPRING 2014

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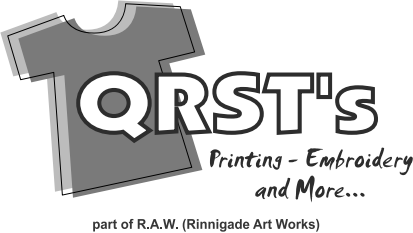
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### Solution to Crossword

from page 8

B	R	A	M	S	T	O	K	E	R	B	A	H	N
R	I	S	E	S	A	B	O	V	E	A	R	E	A
A	P	P	L	E	C	O	R	E	S	S	T	O	P
V	E	I	L	K	E	E	N	E	E	R	R	S	
E	N	R	O	N	A	T	N	O	C	O	S	T	
S	E	E	N	O	T	E	T	R	O	C	H	E	
T	D	S	S	E	X	E	S	B	A	K	E	R	
S	A	B	E	R	M	I	R	E	S	T	R	A	
A	S	A	S	E	T	B	O	O	G	I	E	D	
W	H	I	T	E	O	W	L	N	O	T	S	O	
S	T	L	O	P	R	O	P	S	C	A	P	P	
O	R	E	O	H	O	M	E	P	L	A	N	E	T
F	E	R	N	A	T	A	N	Y	P	R	I	C	E
F	E	S	S	T	E	X	A	S	S	T	A	T	E







*Grigor Dimitrov and Ernests Gulbis show promise as men's tennis' next big players*

Of all the young players on the circuit right now, I think Grigor Dimitrov is the most likely to make the jump to the next level. He is currently the youngest man in the top 20, and the results this year have been pretty impressive. Added to that, he has a very capable coach in Roger Rasheed, who has also coached the likes of Lleyton Hewitt, Gael Monfils, and Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and seems to have

I first saw Dimitrov play at the start of the 2012 season in the Hopman Cup in Perth, Australia. Even back then, he looked like quite a handful. Some of his shots were absolutely stunning, and his single-handed backhand was a real thing of beauty. His decision-making, however, was often questionable.

Two years later, the Bulgarian hasn't really lived up to expectations. His results throughout 2012 and 2013 were inconsistent, with prolonged periods of sluggishness

That solid performance was followed by a title at the ATP World Tour 500 event at Acapulco, where he first beat a struggling Andy Murray in the semifinals and then defeated the big-serving Kevin Anderson from South Africa in the final to lift his first title of the year. He showed that he's finally developing the tempera-

Another contender for future World No. 1, Jerzy Janowicz, has disappointed since his breakthrough performance at Wimbledon last year; however, with a

All things said, greatness in a sport is oftentimes determined by the intangibles, so it will be interesting to see who dominates tennis after the Golden Era.

## CHRISTOPHER A. MAYNOR—THE TECH

5 p.m., Briggs Field

*join@the-tech.mit.edu*

MIT returns to action on Saturday, March 22 when it visits No. 10 Stevens Institute of Technology for its final United Volleyball Conference match of the season.